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7	SUPERIOR COURT OF TH	Ishayla Chambers E STATE OF CALIFORNIA
8		LES, CENTRAL DISTRICT
9		BC 6 2 4 3 5 0
10	THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA,	) Case No.:
11		OMPLAINT FOR INJUNCTIVE AND OTHER EQUITABLE RELIEF AND
12	Plaintiff,	) CIVIL PENALTIES FOR:
13	VS.	) ) 1. LOS ANGELES MUNICIPAL CODE
14		) SECTION 11.00;
15 16	VENICE SUITES, LLC, a California limited liability company; CARL LAMBERT, an individual; and DOES 1 through 100,	) 2. PUBLIC NUISANCE IN VIOLATION OF CIVIL CODE SECTION 3479 ET SEQ.;
17	inclusive,	) ) 3. UNFAIR COMPETITION LAW
18 19	Defendants.	(BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONS ) CODE SECTION 17200 ET SEQ.); AND
20		)
21		) 4. FALSE ADVERTISING PRACTICES ) (BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONS
22		) CODE SECTION 17500 ET SEQ.)
23		) )
24		) )
25 26 27 27	·	) ) ) ) )

COMPLAINT FOR EQUITABLE RELIEF AND CIVIL PENALTIES

Plaintiff, the People of the State of California, complaining of the above-named Defendants, alleges as follows, which allegations are based upon information and belief insofar as they pertain to the conduct of Defendants.

# INTRODUCTION

- 1. This is a civil law enforcement action brought by the Los Angeles City Attorney's Office ("City Attorney") on behalf of the People of the State of California ("People") under LAMC section 11.00; California Public Nuisance Law (Civil Code, section 3479 et seq.); the Unfair Competition Law (Business and Professions Code section 17200 et seq.); and, the False Advertising Law (Business and Professions Code section 17500 et seq.) against Defendants, seeking to bring the apartment building located at 417 Ocean Front Walk ("417 OFW") into compliance with all applicable regulations and to enjoin Defendants from maintaining 417 OFW as an illegal hotel or illegal transient occupancy residential structure.
- 2. The City of Los Angeles is in the midst of a housing crisis. Average renters pay nearly 47% of their income toward rent, well above the 30% of income considered affordable. High rental costs, increasing demand due to population growth, expiring affordability covenants, decreased funding for the production of new affordable housing units and the large scale conversion of affordable and rent stabilized units into short-term rentals contribute to what is now considered to be a major housing crisis in Los Angeles. A report from the Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy¹ confirms that apartment owners are evicting long-term tenants and converting rent-controlled units into commercial short-term rental operations. The loss of these units in the long-term rental market has driven up total housing costs for L.A. renters by more than \$464 million in the last year.
  - 3. Short-term rental schemes, like those described below, have created a business model that relies on incentivizing landlords to illegally transform residential rental units into transient, short term, tourist accommodations. The illegal conversion of rent-stabilized units must end.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy (LAANE: A New Economy For All), Short-Term Rentals and L.A.'s Lost Housing (Aug. 24, 2015) p. 3.

- 4. Defendants own and manage an illegal hotel or illegal transient occupancy residential structure at 417 OFW in Venice, California. The structure, approved as a 32-unit apartment house, once home to long-term tenants, is subject to the City's Rent Stabilization Ordinance.<sup>2</sup> Defendants have emptied the apartment house of long-term tenants and now fill it with short-term, transient occupants. The Certificate of Occupancy issued by the City of Los Angeles does not allow Defendants to operate their apartment house as a hotel or transient occupancy residential structure. In fact, since 2009, Defendants have and continue to operate the apartment building as an illegal hotel, using the Internet to advertise the apartment units as a hotel or transient occupancy rooms and invite members of the public to reserve the units for transient occupancy. Defendants are well aware that what they are doing is illegal. Despite having received an official notice to discontinue the illegal use from the appropriate City enforcement agency, Defendants persist in their unlawful use and operation of the subject property as an illegal, unapproved hotel.
- 5. As a result of their illegal use, Defendants violate the City's zoning laws and directly contribute to the City's lack of affordable housing by removing available housing stock from the rental market.
- 6. Defendants deceive the public with their false advertisements and compete unfairly against legitimate, approved hotels that must comply with necessary regulations, including building and habitability laws, Fire Code requirements, parking requirements and zoning requirements. Defendants further compete unfairly against legitimate hotels by misleading and directing the public to their illegal hotel, thereby reducing lawful occupancies and revenue from legitimate area hotels.
- 7. Defendant Carl Lambert ("Lambert") owns and manages the 32-unit apartment house located at 417 South Ocean Front Walk, Venice, California 90291.<sup>3</sup> By and through

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Los Angeles Municipal Code ("LAMC"), section 151.00 et seq.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> 417 OFW is more specifically described as Lot 247, Block 4 of Golden Bay Tract, as per Map recorded in Book 2, Page 15 of maps in the office of the County Recorder, Assessor Parcel Number 4286-029-004.

Defendant Venice Suites, LLC ("VSLLC"), Lambert owns and/or manages 417 OFW, operating under the name "Venice Suites."

- 8. 417 OFW is a 32-unit apartment house built in 1921. Its operative Certificate of Occupancy, issued June 10, 1966 by the Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety, authorizes the building to be used as a "Thirty-Two Unit Apartment House." It is located in the R3 Multiple Dwelling Zone. (LAMC, § 12.10.) Residential uses, such as apartment house use, are permitted within the R3 Multiple Dwelling Zone. However, commercial hotel use is not permitted within an R3 Multiple Dwelling Zone. (LAMC, § 12.10(A).)
- 9. Plaintiff seeks the appointment of a receiver for 417 OFW pursuant to Business and Professions Code sections 17203 and 17535. Plaintiff also seeks award of civil penalties for Defendants' past and current violations under LAMC section 11.00, subdivision (l) and Business and Professions Code sections 17206 and 17536. Finally, Plaintiff seeks restitution under Business and Professions Code sections 17203, 17204 and 17535 to restore to any person in interest any money which Defendants acquired through unfair competition.

# THE PARTIES

- 10. Plaintiff is the sovereign power of the State of California as designated by LAMC section 11.00, subdivision (l); Civil Code section 3494 and Code of Civil Procedure section 731; and Business and Professions Code sections 17204 and 17535. Plaintiff is the complaining party in civil enforcement actions brought under these statutes and acts through the Los Angeles City Attorney, Michael N. Feuer, who brings the First, Second, Third, and Fourth Causes of Action pursuant to authority granted to him by law.
- 11. Defendant VSLLC is, and at all times relevant hereto was, a limited liability company organized and existing under the laws of the State of California, with its principal place of business in Venice, California. According to publicly available records, VSLLC has owned 417 OFW since September 1999.
- 12. Defendant Lambert is, and at all times relevant hereto was, a resident of Malibu, California, and the managing member of VSLLC.
  - 13. Each of the Defendants is jointly and severally liable by act, omission, strict

liability, negligence, agency, respondeat superior, alter ego, or otherwise for the violations of law alleged herein. At all times relevant hereto, Defendants were acting as the agents, assignees, partners, joint venturers, alter egos, representatives, co-schemers, co-conspirators or employees of each other, and in committing the wrongful acts and omissions alleged herein, were acting within the course and scope of that agency, assignment, partnership, joint venture, alter ego relationship, representation, scheme, conspiracy or employment. Each Defendant had and has knowledge or constructive notice of the acts of every other Defendant. The allegations in this Complaint apply equally to the fictitious Defendants, DOES 1 through 100.

- 14. Whenever this Complaint refers to an act or failure to act by Defendants, such allegation and reference shall be deemed to mean also the act and failure to act of each Defendant, whether acting individually or jointly and severally.
- 15. Defendant Lambert formed, used and continues to use VSLLC as a mere instrumentality and conduit through which, for his convenience, he has conducted and continues to conduct his business and management of 417 OFW. There has been and is a unity of interest between Lambert and VSLLC, which is merely an alter ego of Lambert.
- 16. Plaintiff does not know the true names and capacities of Defendants DOES 1 through 100, inclusive, and therefore sues those Defendants by such fictitious names. Plaintiff will amend this Complaint to insert the true names and capacities of said fictitious Defendants, when ascertained. The allegations in this Complaint apply equally to the fictitious Defendants, DOES 1 through 100.

#### JURISDICTION AND VENUE

- 17. The Court has subject matter jurisdiction over this action pursuant to LAMC section 11.00; Business and Professions Code sections 17204 and 17535; Civil Code section 3479 et seq.; and, LAMC section 11.00.
- 18. The Court has personal jurisdiction over each of the Defendants pursuant to California Constitution, article VI, section 10 and Code of Civil Procedure section 410.10 because each Defendant conducts substantial business in or resides in Los Angeles, California; each Defendant has purposefully availed himself, herself, or itself of the benefits of doing

business in this City and State; Defendants' violations of law alleged herein occurred, in whole or in part, in this City and State; and, each registered corporate Defendant conducts substantial business in the City and County of Los Angeles.

19. Venue for this matter lies within the County of Los Angeles pursuant to Code of Civil Procedure sections 393, 395 and 395.5 because Defendants operate their business in the County of Los Angeles, Defendant Lambert lives in the County of Los Angeles, and the violations of law alleged herein occurred, in whole or in part, in the County of Los Angeles.

# NATURE OF VIOLATIONS AND HISTORY

# **False Advertising**

- 20. Defendants Lambert and VSLLC persist in falsely advertising 417 OFW as a hotel or transient occupancy residential structure. As early as August 2009, Defendants hung banners that advertised 417 OFW for rent as "Venice Suites."
- 21. Defendants developed and/or use a website at <a href="www.venicesuites.com">www.venicesuites.com</a> to advertise 417 OFW as a hotel and to receive bookings of the building's units for transient occupancy via the Internet. The VeniceSuites.com website provides its contact information as: "417 OceanFront [sic] Walk[;] Venice, California, 90291, United States[;] manager@venicesuites.com[;] 310.566.5224." Members of the public can read about, view pictures of, and book rooms directly from the website. The website describes the different types of rooms; the rooms' amenities; allows the public to check the availability of rooms; shows the prices per night; displays photographs and virtual tours of the rooms' dimensions and furnishings; and, even links to reviews posted on TripAdvisor.com.
- View Queen Studios" (\$175 per night) on the ground floor; "City View Deluxe Queen Studios" (\$200 per night) offering "city views" on the first, second, and third floors; "Ocean View One Bedroom Suites" (\$275 to \$300 per night) offering "sea views" on the west side of the building; "City View One Bedroom Suites" (\$200 per night) offering "city views" on the east side of the building; and "Partial Sea View Queen Studios" (\$300 per night) offering "partial sea views" on the top floor.

- 23. The TripAdvisor.com reviews are accessible by clicking on the link provided.

  Since August 2008, there have been at least 253 reviews and 380 photographs posted for "Venice Suites." Some of the photographs are nested in a folder called "Management photos" that are provided "[c]ourtesy of the property owner." The most recent review was posted the first week of June 2016 and the oldest on August 17, 2008.
- 24. Defendants have responded to most online reviews and posts. For example, in response to one comment, "CarlVeniceBeach, Manager at Venice Suites" wrote: "We are glad you enjoyed your stay and hope to see you again on your next visit to Venice Beach. For direct booking discounted rates and the best rate overall please contact us directly via phone or email. The best online rates are available at venicesuites.com."
- 25. In response to another comment, "CarlVeniceBeach, Manager at Venice Suites" wrote: "We are the only Venice Beach boardwalk hotel where you step out our front door and on to the sand. We are within walking distance to everything including boutique shops and restaurants from Abbott Kinney Blvd to the Santa Monica Pier. We have friendly front desk staff providing great customer service to our guests on a daily basis. Our staff is all Venice Beach locals who are very knowledgeable and happy to help with information and suggestions for almost anything. We are glad you enjoyed your stay with us and look forward to seeing you again the next time you are in LA. For direct booking discounted rates and the best rate overall please contact us directly via phone or email. The best online rates are available at venicesuites.com."
- 26. The TripAdvisor webpage for Venice Suites has a link entitled "Best Rates Direct Booking." Clicking on the link leads to Defendants' statement that "[t]he best rates are only available by booking directly with us and on our website. Our rates range from \$150 to \$300 per night depending on the size and view of the room. Mention this Trip Adviser offer for a 15% discount off your stay."
- 27. On the Venicesuites.com website, on the linked page entitled "FAQ at Venice Suites," Defendants advertise 417 OFW as hotel by stating: "We are definitely more that [sic] a hotel. We go the extra mile to bridge the gap between hotel and home and operate as your home

away from home on the beach. We offer guests the chance to live like a local in comfort and style"; "We pride ourselves on having the best rooftop terrace of any hotel on the Venice Beach boardwalk"; and, "We are the only Venice Beach boardwalk hotel where you step out our front door and on to the boardwalk just steps from the sand."

- 28. On the Venicesuites.com website, a linked page entitled "Blog" shows a banner posted on and hanging from the exteriors stating: "More Than a Hotel. VS. Nightly, Weekly & Monthly. (310) 566-2222." Further down the page is the statement: "The hardwood floors and full kitchens, complete with granite counter tops, are just two of the popular features that set our Deluxe Queen Studios apart from other SoCal resorts."
- 29. The "FAQ page" at Venicesuites.com describes information helpful for transient guests, such as: the office hours ("open from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm"); the check-in and check-out times ("check-in time is 3:00 pm and our-check out time is 12:00 noon"); cancellation policy ("[c]ancellations made outside the 10 days from arrival will receive a deposit refund"); housekeeping service; and, directions and preferred modes of transportation from the airport.
- 30. The Venicesuites.com site provides other information targeted toward transient guests: "Venice Beach Events" includes a calendar of coming attractions at Venice Beach; "Location" has an interactive pin map of Venice with drop down menus for local attractions, dining, nightlife, and gyms. Clicking the boxes next to the drop down menus pinpoints specific local establishments.
- 31. The Venicesuites.com website states "Hotel Marketing by BookingSuite." On its website (suite.booking.com), BookingSuite states that it is "a new unit of Booking.com dedicated to helping accommodation providers grow their businesses and brands through cloud-based software and services. The BookingSuite platform integrates with numerous reservation systems, channel managers, social media channels, and property management systems."

  According to Booking.com, BookingSuite offers the typical independent and boutique hotel a mobile-optimized website in exchange for the hotel paying a 10% commission to Booking.com for any "direct" reservations" made through the website in addition to a 15% basic rate for reservations processed through Booking.com.

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- 32. Defendants disseminate untrue or misleading information to the public by advertising 417 OFW as a hotel called "Venice Suites" on many other websites. These include: Booking.com (877 reviews since July 2014); Hotels.com (279 reviews since July 2015); Kayak.com (1,266 reviews since May 2014); Expedia.com (256 reviews since July 2014); Priceline.com (14 reviews since October 2014); Hipmunk.com (625 reviews); Hotwire.com (256 reviews since July 2014); and, Travelocity.com (248 reviews since July 2014).
- welcoming guests since Dec 17, 2013." Similar comments advertising transient occupancy are made on other webpages: Kayak.com ("This beach hotel is within close proximity of Muscle Beach Venice and Venice Fishing Pier"); Expedia.com ("Beachside hotel walking distance from Venice Beach"); Hipmunk.com ("The Venice Suites is a 30 room hotel consisting of studio and one bedroom suites"); Hotwire.com ("Ocean Park, California, United States of America hotel walkable to Venice Beach"); and Travelocity.com ("This beach hotel is within close proximity of Muscle Beach Venice and Venice Fishing Pier").
- 34. One website, called Bestoftheboardwalk.com, includes three links to 417 OFW.

  417 OFW is subsumed under the category "Venice Suites Collection," a "collection of extended-stay apartment hotels offer[ing] the very best in Venice Beach hotel lodging, with full kitchens and a range of vacation enhancing amenities designed to make your stay comfortable and carefree." The website description reads: "Discover a new way of thinking when it comes to hotel accommodations. The Venice Suites Collection offers stylish, apartment style living that is an ideal home base whether you're staying in Venice Beach for business or pleasure. Our spacious, amenity-rich apartments offer contemporary furnishings, modern design features and a full menu of guest-inspired touches that make our Venice Beach collection more like home than a hotel. All properties have FREE PARKING nearby."

# Defendants' Knowledge of Illegality

- 35. At all times relevant, Defendants Lambert and VSLLC knew and know that 417 OFW may not legally be used as a hotel or transient occupancy residential structure. Despite their actual knowledge, Defendants Lambert and VSLLC continue to operate and maintain 417 OFW as an illegal hotel or illegal transient occupancy residential structure.
- 36. Every year since 2005, Lambert and VSLLC have paid the registration or annual registration renewal fee required under the Rent Stabilization Ordinance for each of the 32 rent stabilized units at 417 OFW. (LAMC, § 151.05(A)(5).)
- 37. In 2000, Lambert applied for a building permit to remodel the interior. In the permit application, Lambert described the building's existing use as "Apartment." The Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety issued permit number 00016-10000-01351 on February 24, 2000, authorizing the building's continued use as an apartment building—not as a hotel or transient occupancy residential structure.
- 38. In January 2015, Lambert (on behalf of VSLLC) applied for a Mello Act
  Determination with the Los Angeles Housing and Community Investment Department
  ("HCIDLA") and Los Angeles Department of City Planning ("DCP") to convert the building's
  use from apartment house to transient occupancy. Under the Mello Act, "the conversion or
  demolition of existing residential dwelling units occupied by persons and families of low or
  moderate income . . . shall not be authorized unless provision has been made for the replacement
  of those dwelling units with units for persons and families of low or moderate income." (Gov.
  Code, § 65590, subd. (b).) The City must first determine "that replacement of all or any portion
  of the converted or demolished dwelling units is feasible . . . ." (Gov. Code, § 65590, subd. (b).)
  Once the City makes such determination, then replacing dwelling units occupied by persons and
  families of low or moderate income is required. (Gov. Code, § 65590, subd. (b).)
- 39. In his January 8, 2015 application to HCIDLA, under the heading "Description of proposed demolition or conversion," Lambert wrote "CONVERSION TO TRANSIENT

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Planning Case #ZA-2015-0629 (CDP) (ZV) (ZAA) (SPP) (MEL).

OCCUPANCY RESIDENTIAL." On his January 31, 2015 application to DCP, in the space provided for under the heading "Project Description," Lambert wrote "CHANGE OF USE TO 32 UNIT TRANSIENT OCCUPANCY RESIDENTIAL." The application is still pending.

40. On January 26, 2015, HCIDLA issued a Notice and Order to Comply ("Order to Comply") to Defendants VSLLC and Lambert. The Order to Comply cited Defendants for violating the LAMC by illegally changing 417 OFW's occupancy from residential use to transient use. Specifically, HCIDLA cited Defendants for using 417 OFW as an illegal hotel for transient occupancy without obtaining a building permit and Certificate of Occupancy from the LADBS. The Order to Comply directed Defendants to discontinue the unapproved use by March 4, 2015. Despite having received the Order to Comply, Defendants persist in operating 417 OFW as an illegal hotel or as an illegal transient occupancy residential structure.

# Illegal Use

- Despite having been ordered to discontinue the illegal use of 417 OFW,

  Defendants continue to operate 417 OFW as an illegal hotel or illegal transient occupancy residential structure. In January 2016, a member of the public booked a room at 417 OFW for an overnight stay. The reservation was made through the Venicesuites.com website. On January 8, 2016, the manager (manager@venicesuites.com) sent a reservation confirmation to the guest. The reservation confirmation included a confirmation number and itemized the room reserved (City View Queen Studio); arrival and departure date (January 9 to January 10, 2016); rate (\$120.00); deposit amount (\$16.80); lockbox number and combination; and, provided additional information including "Check In Process," "Parking" and "Information and Policies." The total cost for the overnight stay was \$136.80. Printed in the "Information and Policies" were the following statements relevant to transient occupancy: "Check-in is at 3:00 pm and check-out is at 12:00 noon"; "Housecleaning service is provided for weekly rentals only"; and, "For stays of 7 days or less you may request additional linens and towels."
- 42. On January 8, 2016, the manager also sent the guest a "Venice Suites Guest Receipt." The receipt itemized the guest's name, confirmation number, room type, arrival and departure dates, average daily rate, and invoice number.

- 43. On January 9, 2016, the guest arrived at 417 OFW and entered the combination provided into the keypad at the entrance to gain entry into the building. A sign affixed to the keypad showed contact information for "Venice Suites" and instructions for contacting the "Hotel Office." The guest retrieved the keycard for room #27 from the lockbox. The word "Welcome" was printed in English, Spanish, French, German, Italian and Japanese on the keycard. Brochures advertising the "Venice Suites Hotel Collection" were available nearby.
- 44. On the way to the room, the guest observed several things consistent with transient occupancy: a transient guest wearing a backpack and bringing two pieces of luggage was checking into his room; the mailboxes did not show tenant names, only room numbers; and, a housekeeping service was cleaning one of the rooms.
- 45. Once inside room #27, the guest made other observations consistent with transient occupancy. Affixed to the door was a page of "Important Helpful Information" that included the check in and check out policy; the WiFi network name and password; directions for using the telephone; parking information; and where to find "bed linens for the fold out sofa sleeper." At the bottom of the page was the statement: "BOOK DIRECT AT VENICESUITES.COM ON YOUR NEXT VISIT FOR YOUR RETURN GUEST DISCOUNT." There were complimentary soap, shampoo, conditioner and a stack of towels in the bathroom and customized beach towels labeled "Venice Suites" in the closet. There were also cups, bowls and dishes available for use in the kitchen.
- 46. On June 2, 2016, an investigator for the Los Angeles City Attorney booked a room at 417 OFW for an overnight stay. The reservation was made through the Venicesuites.com website. The investigator booked a one night stay: checking in on June 6, 2016, at 3:00 p.m. and checking out on June 7, 2016 at 11:00 a.m. The cost of the booking was \$159.60.
- 47. Minutes after booking the reservation, the investigator received an email from "noreply@reservation-booking-system.com," with "Venice Suites, Reservation #1671020X Confirmed" in the subject line. The email was entitled "Your Reservation Request" and stated "Thank you for your reservation request. By placing your reservation online you indicated that

you accepted our terms and conditions. Please review your reservation summary as below." The email showed the reservation ID number; guest name; arrival and departure dates; the suite reserved ("Queen Studios"); and, price.

- 48. On June 6, 2016, when the investigator arrived at 417 OFW, he was greeted by the office clerk and checked in. The clerk provided the investigator with two room keys, a gate key for offsite parking and a parking pass.
- 49. The investigator's room was #7, located on the first floor. The room keys to unlock the door were labeled with the word "Welcome," also in Spanish, French, German, Italian and Japanese. A flyer entitled, "Important Helpful Information" was provided on the kitchen table. The flyer described the check-out policy; WiFi network and password; instructions about how to use the telephone; parking instructions (offsite "in one of the designated secured parking garages"); and, instructions for using the "fold out sofa sleeper." The bottom of the page stated: "BOOK DIRECT AT VENICESUITES.COM ON YOUR NEXT VISIT FOR YOUR RETURN GUEST DISCOUNT." The back of the flyer described: the housekeeping service; packages and postal delivery with the address for delivery ("Your Name[;] 417 Ocean Front Walk (Your Apartment Number)[;] Venice, CA 90291"); policy for visiting the roof terrace; and, miscellaneous instructions. The bottom of the back page stated: "BOOK DIRECT AT VENICESUITES.COM ON YOUR NEXT VISIT FOR YOUR RETURN GUEST DISCOUNT."
- 50. The investigator checked out the next day on June 7, 2016. During check out, the investigator received a printout of the cost (\$169.60, including \$10 parking fee). The overnight charges included a parking fee despite having been advertised as free.

#### APPLICABLE LAWS

of residential rental buildings in the City. As the owners and operators of 417 OFW, Defendants have a legal duty to maintain 417 OFW in compliance with every applicable state and local law and regulation.

# Los Angeles Municipal Code section 11.00

- 52. The LAMC provides that "[w]henever in this Code any act or omission is made unlawful it shall include causing, permitting, aiding, abetting, suffering or concealing the act or omission." (LAMC, § 11.00(j).)
- 53. Section 11.00, subdivision (1) of the LAMC provides that: "In addition to any other remedy or penalty provided by this Code, any violation of any provision of this Code is declared to be a public nuisance...."
- 54. LAMC section 11.00, subdivision (l) further provides that: "Violations of this Code are deemed continuing violations and each day that a violation continues is deemed to be a new and separate offense and subject to a maximum civil penalty of \$2,500 for each and every offense." Similarly, LAMC section 11.00, subdivision (m) provides that "each person shall be guilty of a separate [criminal] offense for each and every day during any portion of which any violation of any provision of this Code is committed, continued, or permitted by that person, and shall be punishable accordingly."
- 55. LAMC section 11.00, subdivision (l) declares any violation of the Code to be a nuisance and authorizes Plaintiff to enforce any violation by seeking a restraining order, injunction or other order or judgment in law or equity in the Superior Court. Thus, any violation of the LAMC's Zoning or Building Codes are public nuisances and continuing violations for which Plaintiff may seek redress.
- 56. The Los Angeles Zoning Code, at LAMC section 12.00 et seq., consolidates and coordinates "all existing zoning regulations and provisions into one comprehensive zoning plan in order to designate, regulate and restrict the location and use of buildings, structures and land, for agriculture, residence, commerce, trade, industry or other purposes" and "to regulate and limit the height, number of stories, and size of buildings and other structures . . . to regulate and limit the density of population . . . ." (LAMC, § 12.02.)
- 57. The Los Angeles Building Code, at LAMC section 91.101.2, "safeguard[s] life, limb, health, property and public welfare by regulating and controlling the design, construction, quality of materials, use and occupancy, location and maintenance of all buildings and structures

erected or to be erected within the city . . . . " (LAMC, § 91.101.2.)

# **Rent Stabilization Ordinance**

58. On September 16, 1990, the Los Angeles City Council amended the LAMC's Rent Stabilization Ordinance ("RSO") to alleviate the shortage of decent, safe and sanitary housing in Los Angeles:

# SEC. 151.01. DECLARATION OF PURPOSE.

There is a shortage of decent, safe and sanitary housing in the City of Los Angeles resulting in a critically low vacancy factor. Tenants displaced as a result of their inability to pay increased rents must relocate but as a result of such housing shortage are unable to find decent, safe and sanitary housing at affordable rent levels. Aware of the difficulty in finding decent housing, some tenants attempt to pay requested rent increases, but as a consequence must expend less on other necessities of life. This situation has had a detrimental effect on substantial numbers of renters in the City, especially creating hardships on senior citizens, persons on fixed incomes and low and moderate income households. This problem reached crisis level in the summer of 1978 following the passage of Proposition 13. [¶]...[¶]

Therefore, it is necessary and reasonable to regulate rents so as to safeguard tenants from excessive rent increases, while at the same time providing landlords with just and reasonable returns from their rental units. In order to assure compliance with the provisions of this chapter violations of any of the provisions of this chapter may be raised as affirmative defenses in unlawful detainer proceedings.

(Amended by Ord. No. 166,130, Eff. 9/16/90.)

- 59. The RSO protects tenants from excessive rent increases by regulating rents. At the same time, the RSO provides landlords with just and reasonable returns from their rental units. (LAMC, § 151.01.) Specifically, LAMC section 151.04(A) provides: "It shall be unlawful for any landlord to demand, accept or retain more than the maximum adjusted rent permitted pursuant to this chapter or regulation or orders adopted pursuant to this chapter."
- 60. LAMC section 151.06 limits the maximum rental increases allowed. Sections 151.06(A) and (B) provide the allowable increases for rental units with limited rent increases prior to the enactment of the RSO. Section 151.06(C)(1) provides the maximum rental increase

for a unit where the tenancy was voluntarily vacated or where the tenancy was terminated pursuant to subdivisions 1, 2, 3, 4, 9, or 13 of subsection A of section 151.09. Section 151.06(C)(2) provides that the maximum rent a landlord may collect upon re-renting a unit is limited to the rent in effect at the time of the most recent termination of tenancy plus annual adjustments available under section 151.06 depending on the circumstances of that termination. HCIDLA retains the authority to grant adjustments for capital improvements and other rehabilitation work. (LAMC, § 151.07.)

61. Pursuant to LAMC section 151.09, the RSO prohibits landlords from evicting tenants except when: (1) the tenant has failed to pay rent; (2) the tenant has violated a lawful obligation or covenant of the tenancy and has failed to cure the violation after having received written notice from the landlord; (3) the tenant is committing a nuisance, causes damage, or creates an unreasonable interference with the comfort, safety, or enjoyment of any of the other residents; (4) the tenant is using the rental unit for an illegal purpose; (5) the tenant, who had a written lease or rental agreement with the landlord which terminated, has refused, after written request or demand by the landlord to execute a written extension or renewal of the lease; (6) the tenant has refused the landlord reasonable access to the unit for making repairs or improvements or for inspecting or showing the unit; (7) an unapproved subtenant is in possession of the rental unit at the end of the lease term; (8) the landlord seeks in good faith to recover possession of the rental unit for use and occupancy as a primary place of residence by the landlord, specified family members of the landlord, or a resident manager; (9) the landlord seeks in good faith to recover possession to renovate the unit in accordance with a Tenant Habitability Plan ("THP") and the tenant is unreasonably interfering with implementation of the THP by failing to temporarily relocate or honor a permanent relocation agreement; (10) the landlord seeks in good faith to recover possession of the rental unit to either demolish the rental unit or remove it permanently from rental housing use; (11) the landlord seeks in good faith to recover possession of the rental unit in order to comply with a governmental agency order; (12) the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development is both the owner and plaintiff and seeks to recover possession in order to vacate the property; (13) the rental unit is in a residential hotel, and the landlord seeks to recover possession of the rental unit in order to convert or demolish the unit; and (14) the landlord seeks to recover possession of the rental unit to convert the subject property to an affordable housing accommodation in accordance with an affordable housing exemption issued by the Housing and Community Investment Department. (LAMC, § 151.09(A)(1)-(14).)

- 62. Pursuant to LAMC section 151.09(A)(10), a landlord may recover possession of a rental unit to permanently remove it from rental housing use in compliance with the Ellis Act.
- 63. The 1985 Ellis Act permits landlords to "go out of business." (Gov. Code, § 7060.7.) A landlord or owner must withdraw all of the accommodations of a structure from rent or lease to get out of the business; withdrawing fewer than all of the accommodations is illegal. (Gov. Code, § 7060.7(d).)
- 64. The Ellis Act does not interfere with local government authority over land use, including regulation of the conversion of existing housing to condominiums or other subdivided interests or to other nonresidential use following its withdrawal from rent or lease. (Gov. Code, § 7060.7(a).) Nor does the Ellis Act preempt local regulations governing the demolition and redevelopment of residential properties; override procedural protections designed to prevent abuse of the right to evict tenants; or, (as previously mentioned) permit an owner to withdraw from rent or lease fewer than all of the accommodations. (Gov. Code, § 7060.7(b)-(d).)
- 65. Provisions of the Ellis Act have been incorporated into the LAMC while preserving the City's authority to develop regulations for its implementation:

There continues to be a low vacancy rate for rental units in the City of Los Angeles, and the withdrawal of residential rental property from rent or lease will exacerbate the rental housing shortage and make it more difficult for tenants displaced by the withdrawal to obtain replacement housing. Because of the rental housing shortage, it is essential that tenants be afforded substantial advance notice to enable them to obtain replacement housing, and that they receive other protections available under law.

(LAMC, § 151.22.)

66. If a landlord wishes to demolish or withdraw rental units subject to the RSO from rental use, then the landlord must comply with the provisions of LAMC section 151.23 requiring

the landlord to: (A) file and deliver to the HCIDLA a Notice of Intent to Withdraw (under penalty of perjury) at least 120 days prior to withdrawal; (B) record with the County Recorder a memorandum summarizing the provisions of the Notice of Intent to Withdraw; and, (C) notify each affected tenant. (LAMC, § 151.23(A)-(C).)

- 67. Tenants who are at least 62 years of age or disabled, who have lived in their accommodations for at least one year before the delivery of the Notice of Intent to Withdraw, have the right to extend their tenancy to one year after delivery. The tenant must give written notice to the landlord of this entitlement within 60 days of the date of delivery of the Notice of Intent to Withdraw. (LAMC, § 151.23(C)(5)(a).)
- If a landlord desires to re-rent or re-lease a unit that was the subject of a Notice of Intent to Withdraw, the landlord must file with HCIDLA a Notice of Intention to Re-Rent Withdrawn Accommodation. (LAMC, § 151.24(A).) Displaced tenants who wish to renew their tenancies in their former units that were withdrawn from, but are put back on, the rental market may do so. The tenant must advise the landlord or owner in writing within 30 days of the displacement of his or her desire to consider an offer to renew the tenancy and must furnish the owner with an address to which that offer is to be directed. (Gov. Code, § 7060.2(b)(3) and LAMC, § 151.27(A).) If a tenant advises a landlord of the desire to re-rent a unit and the landlord offers a unit for rent within two years of the withdrawal, the landlord shall offer to reinstate a rental agreement or lease on terms permitted by law. (LAMC, § 121.27.) A landlord who offers for rent or lease a unit that was the subject of a Notice of Intent to Withdraw within two years of the date of withdrawal of unit is liable to any tenant or lessee who was displaced from the property for actual and exemplary damages. (LAMC, § 151.25(A).)
- 69. If a landlord offers for re-rent or re-lease a rental unit which was the subject of a Notice of Intent to Withdraw within five years after the Notice or within five years after the unit was withdrawn, the landlord must file a Notice of Intention to Re-Rent Withdrawn Accommodations. (LAMC, § 151.24(A).) The landlord must offer the unit at the lawful rent in effect when the Notice was filed. (LAMC, § 151.26(A).) The landlord shall first offer the unit to the displaced tenant, provided that the tenant has requested the offer in writing within 30 days

after the landlord has filed the Notice of Intention to Re-Rent Withdrawn Accommodations. (LAMC, § 151.27(B).) A landlord who fails to comply with these requirements is liable to the displaced tenant for punitive damages. (LAMC, § 151.27(B).)

70. The RSO requires every landlord who accepts rent for a rental unit to procure a valid registration or annual registration renewal statement from HCIDLA for each rental unit. (LAMC, § 151.05(A)(5).) The fee for the registration or annual registration renewal for each rental unit is twenty-four dollars and fifty-one cents (\$24.51), due on the first day of January every year. (LAMC, § 151.05(B)(5).)

# **Public Nuisance Law**

- 71. A nuisance is defined as including "[a]nything which is . . . offensive to the senses, or an obstruction to the free use of property, so as to interfere with the comfortable enjoyment of life or property, or unlawfully obstructs the free . . . use [of any public] street, or highway . . . ." (Civ. Code, § 3479.)
- 72. A public nuisance is "one which affects at the same time an entire community or neighborhood, or any considerable number of persons, although the extent of the annoyance or damage inflicted upon individuals may be unequal." (Civ. Code, § 3480.) Substandard conditions, including the unapproved use of a property, fall within the definition of a public nuisance as defined by Civil Code sections 3479 and 3480.
- 73. A public nuisance may be abated by indictment or information, a civil action or abatement accomplished by an injunction issued by a court of equity. (Civ. Code, § 3491; Sullivan v. Royer (1887) 72 Cal. 248, 249; People v. Selby Smelting & Lead Co. (1912) 163 Cal. 84, 90.)

# Nuisance Per Se

74. In California, city and county legislative bodies are empowered to declare what constitutes a nuisance. (Gov. Code, § 38771.) The City Attorney may bring an action to enjoin or abate a public nuisance. (Code Civ. Proc., § 731; LAMC, § 11.00, subd. (l).) Pursuant to LAMC section 11.00(l), any violation of the Code is deemed a public nuisance which may be abated by the City Attorney on behalf of the People of the State of California.

75. "[A]ll parties to a nuisance *per se*, he who creates it and he who maintains it, are responsible for its effect, without limitations of conditions or time." (*McClatchy v. Laguna Lands Limited* (1917) 32 Cal.App. 718, 725.) A continuing nuisance is one which may be abated at any time. (*Spar v. Pacific Bell* (1991) 235 Cal.App.3d 1480, 1485-1486.)

#### **Unfair Competition Law**

- 76. The Unfair Competition Law ("UCL") prohibits "unfair competition," which includes "any unlawful, unfair or fraudulent business act or practice . . . . " (Bus. & Prof. Code, § 17200.) The UCL authorizes the City Attorney to bring a civil enforcement action against any person who engages, has engaged, or proposes to engage in unfair competition. (Bus. & Prof. Code, § 17203.) The UCL defines "person" to include natural persons, corporations, firms, partnerships, joint stock companies, associations and other organizations of persons. (Bus. & Prof. Code, § 17201.)
- 77. Plaintiff may seek injunctive relief, appointment of a receiver, and restitution.

  (Bus. & Prof. Code, §§ 17203 and 17204.) Also, when a UCL action is brought by the City

  Attorney in the name of the People, the City Attorney may seek civil penalties of up to \$2,500 for each violation of the UCL or up to \$5,000 if the violation was perpetrated against a disabled or elderly person. (Bus. & Prof. Code, §§ 17206 and 17206.1.) The UCL's remedies and penalties are cumulative to each other and to the remedies or penalties available under all other laws in California. (Bus. & Prof. Code, § 17205.)

### Appointment of a Receiver

78. Pursuant to Business and Professions Code section 17203, the court may appoint a receiver "to prevent the use or employment by any person of any practice which constitutes unfair competition, as defined in this chapter, or as may be necessary to restore to any person in interest any money or property, real or personal, which may have been acquired by means of such unfair competition." (Bus. & Prof. Code, § 17203.)

#### False Advertising

79. California's False Advertising Law protects consumers and competitors by promoting fair competition in commercial markets for goods and services, by making it unlawful

for "any person . . . corporation . . . or any employee . . . to induce the public to enter into any obligation relating thereto, to make or disseminate . . . before the public in this state . . . in any newspaper or other publication . . . or in any other manner or means whatever . . . any statement, concerning that real or personal property or those services . . . which is untrue or misleading, and which is known, or which by the exercise of reasonable care should be known, to be untrue or misleading . . . ." (Bus. & Prof. Code, § 17500.) To state a claim for false advertising, a plaintiff must show that (1) statements in the advertising are untrue or misleading, and that (2)

Defendants knew, or by the exercise of reasonable care should have known, that the statements were untrue or misleading. (People v. Lynam (1967) 253 Cal.App.2d 959, 965.)

80. A violation of Business and Professions Code section 17500 is a misdemeanor, punishable by fine or imprisonment. (Bus. & Prof. Code, § 17534.) Plaintiff may also seek civil penalties, injunctive relief and restitution. (Bus. & Prof. Code, §§ 17535 and 17536.)

# **FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION**

(Violations of LAMC section 11.00)

# (By Plaintiff against Defendants and DOES 1 through 100)

- 81. Plaintiff alleges and incorporates herein by reference paragraphs 1 through and including 80 of this Complaint as if set forth fully herein.
- 82. Plaintiff brings this action pursuant to LAMC section 11.00, subdivision (1), which authorizes Plaintiff to enforce any violation of the LAMC by seeking an injunction or other appropriate order in the Superior Court.
- 83. Defendants have violated the Los Angeles Zoning Code and Building Code by causing, permitting, and allowing improper use of the following:
  - a. 417 OFW as an illegal hotel or illegal transient occupancy residential structure for transient occupancy (LAMC sections 12.10(A), 12.21.1(A)(1), 12.26(E), 91.109.1, 91.8105, and 91.8204); and
  - b. Failing to comply with an Order to Comply (LAMC section 91.103.3).

- 84. Defendants were notified in writing by HCIDLA of the aforementioned LAMC violations on January 26, 2015. Notwithstanding such notice, Defendants have failed to correct or cease committing the continuing violations.
- 85. Unless enjoined and restrained, Defendants will continue to maintain 417 OFW as an illegal hotel or as an illegal transient occupancy residential structure in violation of the City's comprehensive zoning plan by engaging in the inappropriate use of buildings and land. Said violations contribute directly to the City's lack of affordable housing by removing available housing stock from the rental market; unfairly competing against legitimate area hotels; and, deceiving the public with their false advertisements.
- 86. Plaintiff has no adequate remedy at law and injunctive relief is expressly authorized by LAMC section 11.00, subdivision (l). Plaintiff also seeks costs incurred for investigating and prosecution this action.

# **SECOND CAUSE OF ACTION**

(Violations of Code of Civil Procedure section 731 and Civil Code sections 3479, 3480)

(By Plaintiff against Defendants and DOES 1 through 100)

- 87. Plaintiff alleges and incorporates herein by reference paragraphs 1 through 86 of this Complaint as if set forth fully herein.
- 88. Plaintiff brings this action pursuant to Code of Civil Procedure section 731 to abate a public nuisance.
- 89. Defendants have caused and maintained a continuing public nuisance at 417 OFW since at least 2009 and each day thereafter until the present time. Through their continued operation of 417 OFW in violation of the Los Angeles Zoning and Building Codes, Defendants maintain 417 OFW as a public nuisance as defined by LAMC section 11.00, subdivision (l). Thus, Defendants' continuing illegal acts are continuing public nuisances under the LAMC and Civil Code, as defined in Civil Code sections 3479 and 3480.
- 90. These continuing nuisance conditions at 417 OFW adversely affect the immediate and adjoining neighborhoods, as well as the entire community. The ongoing illegal operation of 417 OFW violates the City's comprehensive zoning plan by engaging in the inappropriate use of

buildings and land, resulting in the loss of affordable rental housing stock; competes unfairly against legitimate area hotels; and, deceives the public with their false advertisements.

- 91. Defendants were notified of the aforementioned nuisance conditions by written notice from HCIDLA on January 26, 2015. Notwithstanding such notice, Defendants continue to illegally operate 417 OFW, thereby maintaining the nuisance conditions.
- 92. Unless Defendants are restrained by order of this Court, Defendants will continue to maintain 417 OFW in the above-described nuisance condition, thereby causing irreparable injury and harm to the public's health and welfare.
- 93. Plaintiff has no adequate remedy at law and injunctive relief is expressly authorized by Code of Civil Procedure sections 526 and 731.
- 94. If it becomes necessary for Plaintiff to correct the violations or abate the nuisance at 417 OFW, Plaintiff will incur substantial costs. Thus, Plaintiff requests recovery of its costs to correct these violations or abate the nuisance and establishment of priority liens on 417 OFW for such costs.

# THIRD CAUSE OF ACTION

(Violations of Business and Professions Code section 17200 et seq.)
(By Plaintiff against Defendants and DOES 1 through 100)

- 95. Plaintiff alleges and incorporates herein by reference paragraphs 1 through 94 of this Complaint as if set forth fully herein.
- 96. Plaintiff brings this cause of action pursuant to Business and Professions Code section 17204 to enjoin Defendants' engaging in unfair competition by their unlawful, unfair or fraudulent business acts or practices.
- 97. Defendants have violated and continue to violate the UCL (Business and Professions Code section 17200 et seq.) by:
  - a. Illegally converting 417 OFW from its approved use as an apartment house to its current unapproved use as a hotel (self-styled as "Venice Suites") or as a transient occupancy residential structure in violation of LAMC sections 12.10(A), 12.26(E), 91.109.1, 91.8105, and 91.8204;

- b. Falsely advertising 417 OFW and Venice Suites as a purported hotel or transient occupancy residential structurer to induce the public to believe that 417 OFW and/or Venice Suites is a legal hotel or transient occupancy residential structure available for transient occupancy. Defendants have made or disseminated, or caused to be made or disseminated, statements before the public in every state and across the world, advertisements over the Internet describing 417 OFW and Venice Suites as a purported hotel or transient occupancy residential structure that were and are untrue and misleading and which were and are known by Defendants to be untrue or misleading, in violation of Business and Professions Code section 17500; and,
- c. Renting residential rooms at 417 OFW and Venice Suites as hotel or transient occupancy rooms, in violation of LAMC sections 12.10(A), 12.26(E), 91.109.1, 91.8105, and 91.8204.
- 98. On January 26, 2015, Defendants were notified by HCIDLA that use of 417 OFW as a hotel or transient occupancy residential structure violated the LAMC. Yet, Defendants have not corrected the violations nor have they indicated to Plaintiff any intention to permanently correct these violations.
- 99. Defendants' acts of unfair competition present a continuing threat to the public and Plaintiff has no adequate remedy at law. Accordingly, unless the Defendants are permanently enjoined and restrained by order of this Court, they will continue to commit acts of unlawful and unfair competition, and thereby continuing to cause irreparable harm and injury to the public.

# **FOURTH CAUSE OF ACTION**

(Violations of Business and Professions Code section 17500 et seq.)
(By Plaintiff against Defendants and DOES 1 through 100)

- 100. Plaintiff alleges and incorporates herein by reference paragraphs 1 through 99 of this Complaint as if set forth fully herein.
  - 101. Plaintiff brings this cause of action pursuant to Business and Professions Code

section 17500 et seq. to enjoin Defendants' acts of false advertising.

- legitimate hotel or transient occupancy residential structure operators, to induce the public to believe that 417 OFW is a hotel or transient occupancy residential structure, and to rent rooms at 417 OFW, by making or disseminating or causing to be made or disseminated from California, before the public in every other state and across the world, advertisements over the Internet with statements describing 417 OFW as a purported hotel or a transient occupancy residential structure and the renting of rooms at 417 OFW that were and are untrue or misleading and which were and are known by Defendants to be untrue or misleading.
- 103. Defendants have advertised and continue to advertise 417 OFW as a hotel or transient occupancy residential structure on various Internet websites. Defendants' false advertising is likely to deceive the public. Indeed, Defendants' false advertising has actually deceived the general consuming public or targeted consumers such that some have suffered actual loss.
- 104. In defiance of the Los Angeles Zoning Code and Building Code and the regulatory agencies charged with enforcing them, Defendants persist in falsely advertising 417 OFW as a hotel or transient occupancy residential structure such that Plaintiff has no adequate remedy at law. Unless Defendants are permanently enjoined and restrained by order of this Court, they will continue to commit acts of false advertising and continue to cause irreparable harm and injury to the public.

# PRAYER FOR RELIEF

Wherefore, Plaintiff prays for judgment against Defendants and DOES 1 through 100, and each of them, as follows:

#### AS TO THE FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION

- 1. That the Court find that Defendants and their agents, heirs, successors, officers, employees and anyone acting on their behalf have violated LAMC section 11.00 et seq.
- 2. That Defendants and their agents, heirs, successors, officers, employees and anyone acting on their behalf be held jointly and severally liable for all penalties and other relief

awarded in favor of Plaintiff and against Defendants.

3. That Defendants and their agents, heirs, successors, officers, employees and anyone acting on their behalf be ordered to pay Plaintiff's abatement costs, re-inspection fees, administrative penalties, and civil penalties in the amount of \$2,500 per day for each and every violation, pursuant to LAMC section 11.00(l).

## AS TO THE SECOND CAUSE OF ACTION

- 4. That 417 OFW, together with the fixtures and moveable property therein and thereon, be declared a public nuisance and be permanently abated as such in accordance with Civil Code sections 3479 and 3480.
- 5. That the Court find that Defendants and their agents, heirs, successors, officers, employees and anyone acting on their behalf have owned, operated, maintained, and managed 417 OFW in a manner constituting a public nuisance.
- 6. That the Court grant a permanent injunction, order of abatement, and judgment in accordance with Civil Code section 3491, enjoining and restraining Defendants and their agents, heirs, successors, officers, employees and anyone acting on their behalf from owning, operating, maintaining, and managing 417 OFW as a public nuisance, and to bring 417 OFW into compliance with all applicable State and local regulations.
- 7. That Defendants and their agents, heirs, successors, officers, employees and anyone acting on their behalf be held jointly and severally liable for all penalties and other relief awarded in favor of Plaintiff and against Defendants.

#### AS TO THE THIRD CAUSE OF ACTION

- 8. That the Court find that Defendants and DOES 1 through 100, their successors, agents, representatives, employees and all persons who act in concert with them have engaged in unfair competition.
- 9. That the Court grant a permanent injunction and order of abatement enjoining and restraining Defendants, DOES 1 through 100, their agents, heirs, successors, officers, employees and anyone acting on their behalf from engaging in unfair competition and from owning,

operating, maintaining, and managing 417 OFW in an unlawful condition, as defined by applicable laws and regulations.

- 10. That the Court appoint a receiver to take charge of 417 OFW, with all powers and duties permitted by law.
- 11. That upon the discharge of the receiver, Defendants, DOES 1 through 100, their agents, heirs, successors, officers, employees and anyone acting on their behalf, be required to maintain 417 OFW in full compliance with all State, County, and City laws.
- 12. That Defendants, DOES 1 through 100, their agents, heirs, successors, officers, employees and anyone acting on their behalf, be adjudged jointly and severally liable and assessed the maximum civil penalty of \$2,500 for each violation of the UCL that they committed, caused, maintained, permitted, and conspired to commit relating to 417 OFW that they owned, managed, and/or had an interest in during the relevant four year time period.
- 13. That Defendants and DOES 1 through 100 be ordered to make direct restitution of any money or other property that may have been acquired as a result of their unlawful and unfair business acts and practices related to 417 OFW.
- 14. That Defendants, DOES 1 through 100, and their agents, heirs, successors, officers, employees and anyone acting on their behalf be held jointly and severally liable for all penalties, restitution and other relief awarded in favor of Plaintiff and against Defendants.

#### AS TO THE FOURTH CAUSE OF ACTION

- 15. That the Court find that Defendants and DOES 1 through 100, their successors, agents, representatives, employees and all persons who act in concert with them have engaged in false advertising.
- 16. That the Court grant a permanent injunction and order of abatement enjoining and restraining Defendants, DOES 1 through 100, their agents, heirs, successors, officers, employees and anyone acting on their behalf from engaging in false advertising and from owning, operating, maintaining, and managing 417 OFW in an unlawful manner, as defined by applicable laws and regulations.

- That Defendants, DOES 1 through 100, their agents, heirs, successors, officers, 17. employees and anyone acting on their behalf, be adjudged jointly and severally liable and assessed the maximum civil penalty of \$2,500 for each violation of the False Advertising Law that they committed, caused, maintained, permitted, and conspired to commit relating to 417 OFW that they owned, managed, and/or had an interest in during the relevant four year time period.
- That Defendants, DOES 1 through 100, and their agents, heirs, successors, 18. officers, employees and anyone acting on their behalf be held jointly and severally liable for all penalties, restitution and other relief awarded in favor of Plaintiff and against Defendants.

#### AS TO ALL CAUSES OF ACTION

- 19. That Plaintiff recovers the amount of the filing fees and fees for the service of process or notices which would have been paid but for Government Code section 6103.5, designating it as such and, that the fees, at the Court's discretion, may include the amount of the fees for certifying and preparing transcripts.
- That the Court issue orders to Plaintiff to record the lis pendens, issue an Order 20. Appointing the Receiver, Permanent Injunction, Abatement Order, and Judgment with the Los Angeles County Recorder.

1	21. That the Court grants Plaintiff such other and further relief as the Court deems
2	just and proper.
3	
4	Dated: June 17, 2016
5	Respectfully submitted,
6	MICHAEL N. FEUER, City Attorney
7	TINA HESS, Assistant City Attorney ANDREW K. WONG, Deputy City Attorney
8	OFFICE OF THE LOS ANGELES CITY ATTORNEY CRIMINAL BRANCH
9	SPECIAL LITIGATION SECTION
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11	By: ANDREW K. WONG
12	Attorneys for Plaintiff,  The People of the State of California
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ATTORNEY OR PARTY WITHOUT ATTORNEY (Name, State Bar no		FOR COURT USE ONLY				
Andrew K. Wong, Deputy City		)				
Office of the Los Angeles Ci						
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	ow must be completed (see instructions	on page 2).				
Check one box below for the case type that I	Dest describes this case:  Contract	Provisionally Complex Civil Litigation				
Auto Tort	Breach of contract/warranty (06)	(Cal. Rules of Court, rules 3.400-3.403)				
Auto (22) Uninsured motorist (46)		Antitrust/Trade regulation (03)				
Other PI/PD/WD (Personal Injury/Property	Rule 3.740 collections (09)	Construction defect (10)				
Damage/Wrongful Death) Tort	Other collections (09)	Mass tort (40)				
Asbestos (04)	Insurance coverage (18) Other contract (37)	Securities litigation (28)				
Product liability (24)	Real Property	Environmental/Toxic tort (30)				
Medical malpractice (45)	Eminent domain/Inverse	Insurance coverage claims arising from the				
Other PI/PD/WD (23)	condemnation (14)	above listed provisionally complex case				
Non-PI/PD/WD (Other) Tort	Wrongful eviction (33)	types (41)				
X Business tort/unfair business practice (07)	Other real property (26)	Enforcement of Judgment				
Civil rights (08)	Unlawful Detainer	Enforcement of judgment (20)				
	Commercial (31)	Miscellaneous Civil Complaint				
Defamation (13)		RICO (27)				
Fraud (16)	Residential (32) Drugs (38)	Other complaint (not specified above) (42)				
Intellectual property (19)	Judicial Review	Miscellaneous Civil Petition				
Professional negligence (25)	Asset forfeiture (05)	Partnership and corporate governance (21)				
Other non-PI/PD/WD tort (35)		Other petition (not specified above) (43)				
Employment Wrongful termination (36)	Petition re: arbitration award (11)	Other petition (not specified above) (43)				
	Writ of mandate (02) Other judicial review (39)					
Other employment (15)		and Court If the coop is complete more the				
2. This case is X is not complete factors requiring exceptional judicial manage		es of Court. If the case is complex, mark the				
a. Large number of separately represent		of witnesses				
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issues that will be time-consuming	to resolve in other countie	es, states, or countries, or in a federal court				
c. Substantial amount of documentary	evidence f. Substantial pos	stjudgment judicial supervision				
3. Remedies sought (check all that apply): a. [	monetary b. nonmonetary; de	eclaratory or injunctive relief c punitive				
4. Number of causes of action (specify): 4						
5. This case is X is not a class	s action suit.					
6. If there are any known related cases, file and	d serve a notice of related case	ay use form QM-015.)				
Date: June 17, 2016						
Andrew K. Wong, Deputy City A	ttorney	NATURATOF PARTY OR ATTORNEY FOR PARTY)				
(TYPE OR PRINT NAME)	NOTICE	WATURGUF PARTITURAL TORNET FOR FARTTY				
• Plaintiff must file this cover sheet with the first paper filed in the action or proceeding (except small claims cases or cases filed						
under the Probate Code, Family Code, or Welfare and Institutions Code). (Cal. Rules of Court, rule 3.220.) Failure to file may result						
in sanctions.						
File this cover sheet in addition to any cover     this case is complex under rule 3.400 et se	sneet required by local court rule.	must serve a conv of this cover sheet on all				
other parties to the action or proceeding.						
• Unless this is a collections case under rule 3.740 or a complex case, this cover sheet will be used for statistical purposes only.  Page 1 of 2						
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Legal Solutions Q Plus

# INSTRUCTIONS ON HOW TO COMPLETE THE COVER SHEET

To Plaintiffs and Others Filing First Papers. If you are filing a first paper (for example, a complaint) in a civil case, you must complete and file, along with your first paper, the Civil Case Cover Sheet contained on page 1. This information will be used to compile statistics about the types and numbers of cases filed. You must complete items 1 through 6 on the sheet. In item 1, you must check one box for the case type that best describes the case. If the case fits both a general and a more specific type of case listed in item 1. check the more specific one. If the case has multiple causes of action, check the box that best indicates the primary cause of action. To assist you in completing the sheet, examples of the cases that belong under each case type in item 1 are provided below. A cover sheet must be filed only with your initial paper. Failure to file a cover sheet with the first paper filed in a civil case may subject a party, its counsel, or both to sanctions under rules 2.30 and 3.220 of the California Rules of Court.

To Parties in Rule 3.740 Collections Cases. A "collections case" under rule 3.740 is defined as an action for recovery of money owed in a sum stated to be certain that is not more than \$25,000, exclusive of interest and attorney's fees, arising from a transaction in which property, services, or money was acquired on credit. A collections case does not include an action seeking the following: (1) tort damages, (2) punitive damages, (3) recovery of real property, (4) recovery of personal property, or (5) a prejudgment writ of attachment. The identification of a case as a rule 3.740 collections case on this form means that it will be exempt from the general time-for-service requirements and case management rules, unless a defendant files a responsive pleading. A rule 3.740 collections case will be subject to the requirements for service and obtaining a judgment in rule 3.740.

To Parties in Complex Cases. In complex cases only, parties must also use the Civil Case Cover Sheet to designate whether the case is complex. If a plaintiff believes the case is complex under rule 3.400 of the California Rules of Court, this must be indicated by completing the appropriate boxes in items 1 and 2. If a plaintiff designates a case as complex, the cover sheet must be served with the complaint on all parties to the action. A defendant may file and serve no later than the time of its first appearance a joinder in the plaintiff's designation, a counter-designation that the case is not complex, or, if the plaintiff has made no designation, a designation that the case is complex.

#### CASE TYPES AND EXAMPLES

#### **Auto Tort**

Auto (22)—Personal Injury/Property Damage/Wrongful Death Uninsured Motorist (46) (if the case involves an uninsured motorist claim subject to arbitration, check this item instead of Auto)

# Other PI/PD/WD (Personal Injury/ Property Damage/Wrongful Death)

Asbestos (04)

Asbestos Property Damage Asbestos Personal Injury/ Wrongful Death

Product Liability (not asbestos or toxic/environmental) (24)

Medical Malpractice (45)

Medical Malpractice-

Physicians & Surgeons

Other Professional Health Care Malpractice

Other PI/PD/WD (23)

Premises Liability (e.g., slip

and fall)

Intentional Bodily Injury/PD/WD

(e.g., assault, vandalism)

Intentional Infliction of

**Emotional Distress** 

Negligent Infliction of

**Emotional Distress** 

Other PI/PD/WD

#### Non-PI/PD/WD (Other) Tort

**Business Tort/Unfair Business** 

Practice (07)

Civil Rights (e.g., discrimination,

false arrest) (not civil

harassment) (08)

Defamation (e.g., slander, libel)

(13)

Fraud (16)

Intellectual Property (19)

Professional Negligence (25)

Legal Malpractice

Other Professional Malpractice (not medical or legal)

Other Non-PI/PD/WD Tort (35)

**Employment** 

Wrongful Termination (36) Other Employment (15)

Contract

Breach of Contract/Warranty (06)

Breach of Rental/Lease Contract (not unlawful detainer

or wrongful eviction)

Contract/Warranty Breach—Seller Plaintiff (not fraud or negligence)

Negligent Breach of Contract/

Warranty

Other Breach of Contract/Warranty

Collections (e.g., money owed, open

book accounts) (09)

Collection Case—Seller Plaintiff Other Promissory Note/Collections

Case

Insurance Coverage (not provisionally

complex) (18)

Auto Subrogation Other Coverage

Other Contract (37)

Contractual Fraud

Other Contract Dispute

#### Real Property

**Eminent Domain/Inverse** 

Condemnation (14)

Wrongful Eviction (33)

Other Real Property (e.g., quiet title) (26)

Writ of Possession of Real Property Mortgage Foreclosure

Quiet Title

Other Real Property (not eminent

domain, landlord/tenant, or

foreclosure)

#### Unlawful Detainer

Commercial (31)

Residential (32)

Drugs (38) (if the case involves illegal drugs, check this item; otherwise,

report as Commercial or Residential)

#### Judicial Review

Asset Forfeiture (05)

Petition Re: Arbitration Award (11)

Writ of Mandate (02)

Writ-Administrative Mandamus

Writ-Mandamus on Limited Court

Case Matter

Writ-Other Limited Court Case

Review

Other Judicial Review (39)

Review of Health Officer Order

Notice of Appeal-Labor

Commissioner Appeals

Provisionally Complex Civil Litigation (Cal. Rules of Court Rules 3.400-3.403)

Antitrust/Trade Regulation (03)

Construction Defect (10)

Claims Involving Mass Tort (40)

Securities Litigation (28)

Environmental/Toxic Tort (30)

Insurance Coverage Claims (arising from provisionally complex

case type listed above) (41)

**Enforcement of Judgment** 

Enforcement of Judgment (20)

Abstract of Judgment (Out of County)

Confession of Judgment (non-

domestic relations)

Sister State Judgment

Administrative Agency Award

(not unpaid taxes)

Petition/Certification of Entry of

Judgment on Unpaid Taxes

Other Enforcement of Judgment

Case

## Miscellaneous Civil Complaint

**RICO (27)** 

Other Complaint (not specified

above) (42)

**Declaratory Relief Only** 

Injunctive Relief Only (non-

harassment)

Mechanics Lien

Other Commercial Complaint

Case (non-tort/non-complex)

Other Civil Complaint

(non-tort/non-complex)

#### **Miscellaneous Civil Petition**

Partnership and Corporate Governance (21)

Other Petition (not specified

above) (43)

Civil Harassment

Workplace Violence

Elder/Dependent Adult

Abuse

**Election Contest** 

Petition for Name Change

Petition for Relief from Late

. Claim

Other Civil Petition

CASE NUMBER

# CIVIL CASE COVER SHEET ADDENDUM AND STATEMENT OF LOCATION (CERTIFICATE OF GROUNDS FOR ASSIGNMENT TO COURTHOUSE LOCATION)

This form is required pursuant to Local Rule 2.3 in all new civil case filings in the Los Angeles Superior Court.

- Step 1: After completing the Civil Case Cover Sheet (Judicial Council form CM-010), find the exact case type in Column A that corresponds to the case type indicated in the Civil Case Cover Sheet.
- Step 2: In Column B, check the box for the type of action that best describes the nature of the case.
- Step 3: In Column C, circle the number which explains the reason for the court filing location you have chosen.

# Applicable Reasons for Choosing Court Filing Location (Column C)

- 1. Class actions must be filed in the Stanley Mosk Courthouse, Central District.
- 2. Permissive filing in central district.
- 3. Location where cause of action arose.
- 4. Mandatory personal injury filing in North District.
- 5. Location where performance required or defendant resides.
- 6. Location of property or permanently garaged vehicle.

- 7. Location where petitioner resides.
- 8. Location wherein defendant/respondent functions wholly.
- 9. Location where one or more of the parties reside.
- 10. Location of Labor Commissioner Office.
- 11. Mandatory filing location (Hub Cases unlawful detainer, limited non-collection, limited collection, or personal injury).

Auto Tort

Other Personal Injury/ Property

A Civil Case Cover Sheet Category No.	B Type of Action (Check only one)	C Applicable Reasons - See Step 3 Above
Auto (22)	□ A7100 Motor Vehicle - Personal Injury/Property Damage/Wrongful Death	1, 4, 11
Uninsured Motorist (46)	□ A7110 Personal Injury/Property Damage/Wrongful Death – Uninsured Motorist	1, 4, 11
Asbestos (04)	□ A6070 Asbestos Property Damage □ A7221 Asbestos - Personal Injury/Wrongful Death	1, 11 1, 11
Product Liability (24)	☐ A7260 Product Liability (not asbestos or toxic/environmental)	1, 4, 11
Medical Malpractice (45)	□ A7210 Medical Malpractice - Physicians & Surgeons □ A7240 Other Professional Health Care Malpractice	1, 4, 11 1, 4, 11
Other Personal Injury Property Damage Wrongful Death (23)	<ul> <li>□ A7250 Premises Liability (e.g., slip and fall)</li> <li>□ A7230 Intentional Bodily Injury/Property Damage/Wrongful Death (e.g., assault, vandalism, etc.)</li> <li>□ A7270 Intentional Infliction of Emotional Distress</li> <li>□ A7220 Other Personal Injury/Property Damage/Wrongful Death</li> </ul>	1, 4, 11 1, 4, 11 1, 4, 11 1, 4, 11

SHORT TITLE: People v. VENICE SUITES, LLC, et al.

CASE NUMBER

			,JD,
	A Civil Case Cover Sheet Category No.	B Type of Action (Check only one)	C Applicable Reasons - See Step 3 Above
	Business Tort (07)	☐ A6029 Other Commercial/Business Tort (not fraud/breach of contract)	1, 2, 3
perty Tort	Civil Rights (08)	☐ A6005 Civil Rights/Discrimination	1, 2, 3
ry/ Pro I Deatl	Defamation (13)	☐ A6010 Defamation (slander/libel)	1, 2, 3
al Inju	Fraud (16)	☐ A6013 Fraud (no contract)	1, 2, 3
Non-Personal Injury/ Property Damage/ Wrongful Death Tort	Professional Negligence (25)	□ A6017 Legal Malpractice □ A6050 Other Professional Malpractice (not medical or legal)	1, 2, 3 1, 2, 3
žö	Other (35)	☐ A6025 Other Non-Personal Injury/Property Damage tort	1, 2, 3
ent	Wrongful Termination (36)	☐ A6037 Wrongful Termination	1, 2, 3
Employment	Other Employment (15)	□ A6024 Other Employment Complaint Case □ A6109 Labor Commissioner Appeals	1, 2, 3 10
	Breach of Contract/ Warranty (06) (not insurance)	<ul> <li>□ A6004 Breach of Rental/Lease Contract (not unlawful detainer or wrongful eviction)</li> <li>□ A6008 Contract/Warranty Breach -Seller Plaintiff (no fraud/negligence)</li> <li>□ A6019 Negligent Breach of Contract/Warranty (no fraud)</li> <li>□ A6028 Other Breach of Contract/Warranty (not fraud or negligence)</li> </ul>	2, 5 2, 5 1, 2, 5 1, 2, 5
Contract	Collections (09)	<ul> <li>□ A6002 Collections Case-Seller Plaintiff</li> <li>□ A6012 Other Promissory Note/Collections Case</li> <li>□ A6034 Collections Case-Purchased Debt (Charged Off Consumer Debt Purchased on or after January 1, 2014)</li> </ul>	5, 6, 11 5, 11 5, 6, 11
	Insurance Coverage (18)	☐ A6015 Insurance Coverage (not complex)	1, 2, 5, 8
	Other Contract (37)	□ A6009 Contractual Fraud □ A6031 Tortious Interference □ A6027 Other Contract Dispute(not breach/insurance/fraud/negligence)	1, 2, 3, 5 1, 2, 3, 5 1, 2, 3, 8, 9
	Eminent Domain/Inverse Condemnation (14)	☐ A7300 Eminent Domain/Condemnation Number of parcels	2, 6
operty	Wrongful Eviction (33)	□ A6023 Wrongful Eviction Case	2, 6
Real Property	Other Real Property (26)	□ A6018 Mortgage Foreclosure □ A6032 Quiet Title □ A6060 Other Real Property (not eminent domain, landlord/tenant, foreclosure)	2, 6 2, 6 2, 6
<b>&gt;</b>	Unlawful Detainer-Commercial (31)	☐ A6021 Unlawful Detainer-Commercial (not drugs or wrongful eviction)	6, 11
Unlawful Detainer	Unlawful Detainer-Residential (32)	☐ A6020 Unlawful Detainer-Residential (not drugs or wrongful eviction)	6, 11
wful D	Unlawful Detainer- Post-Foreclosure (34)	□ A6020FUnlawful Detainer-Post-Foreclosure	2, 6, 11
Unla	Unlawful Detainer-Drugs (38)	□ A6022 Unlawful Detainer-Drugs .	2, 6, 11

People v. VENICE SUITES, LLC, et al.

		_			
	Civil Case Cover Sheet Category No.	B Type of Action (Check only one)		C Applicable Reasons - See Step 3 Above	
	Asset Forfeiture (05)		A6108	Asset Forfeiture Case	2, 3, 6
Judicial Review	Petition re Arbitration (11)		A6115	Petition to Compel/Confirm/Vacate Arbitration	2, 5
			A6151	Writ - Administrative Mandamus	2, 8
<u> </u>	Writ of Mandate (02)		A6152	Writ - Mandamus on Limited Court Case Matter	2
Jud		0	A6153	Writ - Other Limited Court Case Review	2
	Other Judicial Review (39)	0	☐ A6150 Other Writ /Judicial Review		2, 8
5	Antitrust/Trade Regulation (03)		A6003	Antitrust/Trade Regulation	1, 2, 8
itigati	Construction Defect (10)		A6007	Construction Defect	1, 2, 3
Provisionally Complex Litigation	Claims Involving Mass Tort (40)	_	A6006	Claims Involving Mass Tort	1, 2, 8
y Con	Securities Litigation (28)	0	A6035	Securities Litigation Case	1, 2, 8
isional	Toxic Tort Environmental (30)	0	A6036	Toxic Tort/Environmental	1, 2, 3, 8
Prov	Insurance Coverage Claims from Complex Case (41)	0	A6014	Insurance Coverage/Subrogation (complex case only)	1, 2, 5, 8
			A6141	Sister State Judgment	2, 5, 11
	Enforcement of Judgment (20)			Abstract of Judgment	2, 6
Enforcement of Judgment				Confession of Judgment (non-domestic relations)	2, 9
rcer Idgr				Administrative Agency Award (not unpaid taxes)	2, 8
info L		l		Petition/Certificate for Entry of Judgment on Unpaid Tax	2, 8
ш о				Other Enforcement of Judgment Case	2, 8, 9
	RICO (27)	0	A6033	Racketeering (RICO) Case	1, 2, 8
Miscellaneous Civil Complaints			4 0000	2	
Miscellaneous ivil Complaint	Other Complaints (Not Specified Above) (42)			Declaratory Relief Only	1, 2, 8
cella Con				Injunctive Relief Only (not domestic/harassment)	2, 8
Misc	(Not Specified Above) (42)			Other Commercial Complaint Case (non-tort/non-complex)	1, 2, 8
- 0			A6000	Other Civil Complaint (non-tort/non-complex)	1, 2, 8
0 (	Partnership Corporation Governance (21)		A6113	Partnership and Corporate Governance Case	2, 8
. = 1			A6121	Civil Harassment	2, 3, 9
sno			A6123	Workplace Harassment	2, 3, 9
Miscellaneous Civil Petitions	Other Petitions (Not		A6124	Elder/Dependent Adult Abuse Case	2, 3, 9
- G	Specified Above) (43)		A6190	Election Contest	2
S. S.			A6110	Petition for Change of Name/Change of Gender	2, 7
-40.			A6170	Petition for Relief from Late Claim Law	2, 3, 8
C)			A6100	Other Civil Petition	2, 9
CL:					-1.0

SHORT TITLE: People v. VENICE SUITES, LLC, et al.	CASE NUMBER	
		التين:

Step 4: Statement of Reason and Address: Check the appropriate boxes for the numbers shown under Column Office the type of action that you have selected. Enter the address which is the basis for the filing location, including zip-code. (No address required for class action cases).

REASON:  ∅ 1. ∅ 2. ∅ 3. □ 4. □ 5. □ 6. □ 7. □ 8. □ 9. □ 10. □ 11.			ADDRESS: 200 N. Main Street	1,000-01
CITY: Los Angeles	STATE: CA	ZIP CODE: 90012		

Step 5: Certification of Assignment: I certify that this case is properly filed in the Central District of the Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles [Code Civ. Proc., §392 et seq., and Local Rule 2.3(a)(1)(E)].

Dated: J	une 17,	2016	
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# PLEASE HAVE THE FOLLOWING ITEMS COMPLETED AND READY TO BE FILED IN ORDER TO PROPERLY

# COMMENCE YOUR NEW COURT CASE:

- 1. Original Complaint or Petition.
- 2. If filing a Complaint, a completed Summons form for issuance by the Clerk.
- 3. Civil Case Cover Sheet, Judicial Council form CM-010.
- Civil Case Cover Sheet Addendum and Statement of Location form, LACIV 109, LASC Approved 03-04 (Rev. 02/16).
- 5. Payment in full of the filing fee, unless there is court order for waiver, partial or scheduled payments.
- A signed order appointing the Guardian ad Litem, Judicial Council form CIV-010, if the plaintiff or petitioner is a minor under 18 years of age will be required by Court in order to issue a summons.
- Additional copies of documents to be conformed by the Clerk. Copies of the cover sheet and this addendum must be served along with the summons and complaint, or other initiating pleading in the case.